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A SERMON PREACHED before the KING AT WHITE-HALL,

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BY

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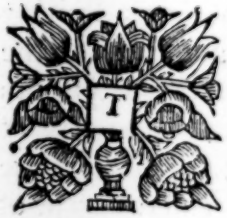
St. Jude, Verſ. 22, 23.

And of ſome have compaſſion, making a difference: And others ſave with fear, pulling them out of the fire; hating even the garment ſpotted by the fleſh.



He Man whoſe Soul is once Effectually wrought upon by the *Spirit of Grace*, beſtows his firſt and chief care in purſuit of Salvation: for he then ſees how deep, how ſpreading, and how mortal an infection Sin is, and is throughly convinced of the manifold danger of every particular Iniquity; in as much, as it puts a Man into a ſtate of Enmity againſt God, and his Laws, and ſo *worketh Death, and that Eternal*: and therefore he cannot reſt, until he be reſolv'd of that *Important Quære*, which was ſtarted by the *Pagan Jaylor* to *Paul* and *Silas*, *Sirs, What muſt I do to be ſaved?* And, being converted himſelf, he becomes very ſollicitous (as St. *Peter* was commanded to be) for the *ſtrengthening of his Brethren*; and doth what in him lies, to rouze them out of their Senſuality,

Rom. 7. 13.

Luk. 22. 32.

that they may not ſleep ſecurely in their Sins, till Eternal Flames become their *firſt Awakners.*

This is indeed a Catholick and comprehenſive Duty, and directed accordingly, as this Epiſtle is, *Omnibus Chriſti Fidelibus, To all that are Sanctified by God the Father.* But, becauſe that which is *every Mans* Work, is *no Mans* Work; as God ſent his *Angel* to bring *Lot* out of *Sodom*, and conduct him to *Zoar*; ſo, that you might never want *Men* to guide you to the City of Refuge, when the Avenger purſues you, God hath committed to us the care of your Souls, and given us Commiſſion to invite you to be Reconciled to him, and to accept of that Everlaſting Entertainment which he hath provided for you; and, rather then fail, to *Compel* you to come in to his *Manſions of Glory.*

Vers. 1.

B. And, becauſe we ſhall meet with *Men* in the World of as *different tempers*, as *complexions*, he hath alſo given us ſufficient Inſtructions, how to demean our ſelves towards them; bids us, not ſerve all our *Patients* out of the ſame *Box*; but, like skilful *Phyſitians*, apply different *Medicines* according to the difference of their *Maladies*; to manage the Word of God, and our Miniſtery of Reconciliation, with ſuch

Spiritual Skill, and Wiſdom, as to give every one his proper portion. Some *Mens* Hearts are like ſoft Wax, the heat of the *Hand* will make them yield, without that of the *Fire*; a gentle *Admonition* will prevail more with them, than a dreadful *Commination*; they have *Ingenuity* enough to be *ſham'd* out of their Sins upon the leaſt diſcovery: Others are ſo hardned in their Villanies, that they muſt be *ſcar'd*, or *whipt* out of them, as the *Buyers* and *Sellers* were out of the *Temple*, before they will leave them; they, who ſin out of *infirmity*, may be won with *gentle* means, but *Obſtinate Offenders* are to be humbled with *terrours*.

Every *Man* hath his Ignorances and Inadvertencies, his Miſtakes and Errours, Infirmities and Indiſcretions; in any of which, if he be at any time *overtaken*, or ſin out of *blind Zeal*, you muſt neither *inſult* over his fall, nor *deſpair of his riſing*, but *reſtore him with meekneſs*; for he ſins, not by *Deſign*, but *Folly*; he falls, not by *Malice*, but by *Surprize*; not by the *Strength of his Will*, but by the *Frailty of his Nature*: If he be wavering and unſteady in the Faith, you muſt *recover him with mildneſs*; and, if his fault be ſmall, cover it with the *Vail of pity* and *compaſſion*, and uſe gentle means to cure

cure him. But yet *make a difference*, if you meet with Men, whose Distempers are *Inveterate*, and Incorporated into their Natures by *Evil Customs*, your Remedies must be *sharp and quick*; if their sin be *bold*, your reprehension must not be *bashful:* The Chirurgion must bring the Saw and the Caustick to such Gangreen'd Members, proclaim the Terrours of the Lord to them, who *will not stand in awe*, but Heb. 10. 6. *sin wilfully, after they have received the Knowledge of the Truth*; Sheathe the Two edged Sword of *Gods Word* in their Bowels; give them a Prospect of the Approaching Destruction, which will suddenly overtake them, if they do not *flee for their Lives:* Suffer them not to look upon the Wrath to come, at the wrong end of the Prospective-Glass; but, *knowing the Terrours of the Lord, use an holy Violence*, and snatch them rudely out of that Fire, which will *Singe* them, if they stay but a minute in it, and will *Devour* them, if their continuance be any longer, and bring them (if it be possible) to the hatred of all *the beginnings*, and *least degrees* of Impurity and Uncleanness; make them so afraid of the Infection of Fleshly Lusts, as to avoid the *very Garments that are spotted with* it: If private Admonitions do not Reclaim them,

them, proceed to publick; and rather than not pull them out of the flames of Hell, *Cut them off from the Communion of the Faithful*, and *deliver them up to Satan*, to which the Τὺς μὲν ἐλέγχετε διακρινομένους refers, Reprove them sharply, when they are Convinc'd, or Separated by *Church-Censures*; when they are debarr'd from sitting at their Fathers Table with the rest of their Brethren, which (although they may be an instance of Severe Discipline) are yet with designs of great Mercy, (the most dreadful of them being *Medicinal*, not *Mortal*) that, by punishment of the *Flesh*, the *Soul* may be saved in the Day of the Lord: *And of some have compassion, making a difference: And others save with fear, pulling them out of the Fire; hating even the Garment spotted by the Flesh.*

These words may possibly have an eye to *Church-Discipline*, and be intended as a *Direction* to the Governours of the Church, for the Exercising, not only of *the milder part* of the Apostolical Office, but also of those *higher degrees of Censures*, (call'd, *The coming with a Rod*) which, in case of Obstinacy, is not only *Seasonable*, but *Unavoidable*: But I shall rather consider them at present, either as they concern

concern *our ſelves* in the Actions of Repentance, or *our Brethren* in thoſe of Fraternal Correction, and ſo may Inſtruct *all Men*, but eſpecially us of the *Clergy*, how to behave our ſelves towards all, even the *worſt of recoverable* Sinners.

Now, as our Patients and their Diſtempers are different, ſo muſt alſo our Preſcriptions and Directions be; a *Green Wound* and an *Ulcer* are not to be Cured with the ſame Application: And, that I may make no other difference but what our *Apoſtle* himſelf hath done, nor be tempted to forſake the Scope and Method of my *Text*, I ſhall diſtinctly ſort what I have to ſay, into a Practical Reſolution of theſe Four Inquiries.

I. Of whom it is that we are to have Compaſſion, and with what difference? How that Compaſſion is to be expreſs'd and exercis'd?

II. How far we may be inſtrumental to the Salvation of others? and with what fear and caution we muſt attempt it?

III. What

III. What is meant by *Pulling them out of the Fire?* What the Phraſe *implies*, and what it *requires* of us?

IV. What is meant by *Hating the Garment ſpotted by the Fleſh?* and, how it is our *Intereſt*, as well as our *Duty*, to do ſo.

I. *Of ſome have compaſſion.* This noble and generous Affection of *compaſſion*, is ſo *Eſſential* to a Man, ſo rivetted to his very *Being*, and implanted in his *Nature*, that, unleſs he degenerate from his *Humanity*, he cannot obſerve, but he muſt alſo condole the Calamities of his Neighbours, out of that relation which he bears to *the Species of Mankind*; and, by how much the *more noble* any Man is, by ſo much is he the *more compaſſionate*; and, as all Natural Perfections and Excellencies are *improv'd by Religion*, ſo *this* eſpecially, and that *Spiritual Conſanguinity* which ariſes from our *Chriſtianity*, muſt needs make us ſuffer by way of conſent and ſympathy with our fellow Chriſtians, eſpecially when they groan under the burden of their Sins, which of all Loads is the greateſt.

So great a Lover of Mankind was our Bleſſed Saviour, that he could not, but with wet Eyes, behold the preſent Sins and future Sufferings, no not of his moſt inveterate Enemies. Nor is he a Living Member of that *Body*, of which *Chriſt* is the *Head*, who doth not *grieve for the Afflictions of* Joſeph, *and mourn over the Sins* of his Brethren. Would it not make your Hearts ake, to ſee your Neighbours Houſes on Fire about their Ears, and them *faſt aſleep* in their Beds? And, if you have the leaſt ſpark of *Chriſtianity or Compaſſion* in your Breaſts, how can your Souls chuſe but be moved within you, to ſee them falling inſenſibly into thoſe Everlaſting Flames, out of which there will be no redemption? This is not only a moſt *neceſſary Charity* to our Brethrens Souls, but ſuch a *Chriſtian Duty*, as makes it an *Act of Righteouſneſs* too, for we *are Members one of another*; nor hath *Chriſt* given us any *Bill of Divorce*, whereby we are ſeparated from the care of our Neighbours, whom we are to love as our ſelves. A Man truly ingrafted into *Chriſt*, is therefore a Common Bleſſing, of a Communicative Spirit, his large Heart is always ſet upon *doing Publick Good*, a Duty which hath been ſo long *out of faſhion*, that

Men

Men begin to queſtion, Whether it be a Duty or not? their *Lives* do at leaſt ſpeak the ſame Language which *Cain* did with his Lips, *Am I my Brothers Keeper?* and, Where ſhall we find a Man of St. *Bernard's* temper? who thought himſelf concern'd, whereſoever God or his Brethren were ſo? *Etſi non tanti ſum ut Romæ habeam propria negotia, nulla tamen quæ Dei eſſe conſtiterit, a me duco aliena.* Gen. 4. 9. *Epiſt. ad Hamericum Cancellar.*

If ever *Bowels of Compaſſion* were *fit to put on*, it is in this *Wicked Age* of ours; and 'tis indeed for want of being mindful of *our own*, that we become ſo regardleſs of *other Mens* concerns: for Compaſſion is firſt learn'd *at home*, and then walks *abroad*. I muſt firſt take my Brother *into my ſelf*, before I can pity him as I ought; and having felt the anguiſh of *a Broken Spirit* in my ſelf, I cannot chuſe but *pity it* in another: When *my Bones are burnt as an Hearth*, Pſal. 102. 3. and I have felt the *Scorching Flames of Sin* in my own Boſom, I ſhall eaſily think my ſelf concern'd, to *ſnatch my Brother out of that Fire*; having been deeply affected with the guilt of mine own Iniquities, I ſhall be quickly invited to let my Compaſſionate Soul go through this preſent evil World, as through an *Hoſpital* or *Bedlam*, and into whatſoever corner I caſt mine

Eyes, I ſhall behold great Objects of Pity, and be conſtrained to weep for them, who have not ſo much ſenſe of their miſery as to weep for themſelves.

When we behold Men rock'd aſleep in the Cradle of Security, and never dreaming of Heaven or Hell, of Death or Judgment, but *Courting* their Miſeries, and *Embracing* their approaching Ruine, as if they had combin'd to *drive on the Intereſt*, and get *Poſſeſsion* of the Kingdom of Satan; when we ſee ſome groaping *in the dark*, others taking great care and pains to *blow out the light* which would diſcover Happineſs to them; Men Sick of *Mortal Diſeaſes*, and yet like the *Drunken Lapithæ*, deſpiſing their *Phyſitians*; ſo *deſperately* tainted with Impurity, that, like *Sodom and Gomorrah*, nothing but *Fire from Heaven* can be applyed to them; when we ſee how near their *ſhort-liv'd Happineſs* is expiring, and how ſuddenly their *Imaginary Pleaſures* will be exchang'd into *Real and Eternal Torments*, what can we *do leſs*, and indeed, what can we *do more* than bewail them? *Nunquid in te ſunt viſcera pietatis, qui plangis corpus a quo receſsit anima, & non plangis animam a qua receſsit Deus?* Will *pity* move you to bewail that *Body* from whence

St. Bern.

the

the *Soul* is departed? and *piety* not conſtrain you to lament that *Soul*, from whence *God* is departed? He, who hath any *bowels of compaſſion* in him, muſt needs be affected with ſuch a diſmal ſpectacle, and expreſs his *deep ſenſe* of it, and ſorrow for it; not only in the *melting* of his fluent Eyes, and the *yearnings of his Bowels*; but alſo in ſuch an *active compaſſion*, and in ſuch ſerious attempts, as may relieve and reſtore them.

Having therefore the *Nature of the Crime*, the *Fitneſs of the Seaſon*, and, the *Quality of the Perſon offending*, always before our Eyes, let us come to him, *in the cool of the day*, and invite him to take cognizance and compaſſion of himſelf, leſt he Ride Poſt into Hell for want of one to ſtop him; and, that he may not have cauſe to ſay, you come to *caſt out Satan by Satan*, *one Devil by another*, be ſure to do it with ſuch a *compoſed Spirit*, as befits ſo Compaſſionate and Divine a Work: The ſharp ſeverity of a diſeaſed Mind, will rather *ſpur him on*, in the career of his Crimes, than *reſtrain* him; rather make him *flee out* with more ſpeed and violence, than *moderate* or amend him: and therefore let us not through *Pride*, or *Animoſity*, out of *an itch of Government*, or the *indignation*

dignation of an angry Mind, run beyond the gentleneſs of Chriſtian Monitors, (unto which *if they hearken, we have won our Brethren:*) but, if they will *obſtinately periſh*, after all our Care and Compaſſion, we ſhall *ſave our ſelves*, becauſe we would have *ſav'd them:* We may *loſe our Labour*, but we ſhall not *loſe our Charity*, if after we have *forewarn'd* them of the danger, they will yet make *ſo mad a choice* as *to take Hell by violence*; their Obſtinacy is *unpardonable*, and we muſt ſit down and bemoan our *Unſucceſsful Endeavours*. *Miſeremini condolendo quod non poteſtis eos ſalvare.*

Gloſs.

Alas! *The Natural Man perceiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are fooliſhneſs to him; neither can he know them, becauſe they are Spiritually diſcerned:* But *he that is Spiritual judgeth all things:* He ſees *by Faith* the *Heaven*, which you neglect, and thoſe *Bleſſed Souls* now in Glory, whoſe *Everlaſting Companions* you might be, if you pleas'd; and he ſees alſo *your Brethrens deſpairing Souls now in Hell*, among thoſe Devils that deceived them, who came thither the *ſame way* you are going in; and with his *Bodily Eyes*, doth he alſo ſee at the ſame time a multitude of *Senceleſs and Senſual Sinners* living round about him,

1 Cor. 2. 14.

him, who lay none of these things to heart, but damn and defile not only *their own*, but *their Brethrens Souls* by their Errours, Seductions, and Ungodly Examples, as if they were the *Devils Factors*, under *Commission from him* to make *Proselytes for Hell*, and accordingly he cannot but compassionate their sad Condition, and wonder at their Stupidity. Oh! What a *Besotting Thing* is *Sin*, which can thus *petrifie* the Reasonable Soul, and make *Men* more insensible than Beasts which perish? What a *Bedlam* is this wicked World, wherein Thousands are so *distracted*, as to make it *their Business* to *undo themselves and others* to all Eternity? Can we not bring you to some *sober* thoughts of your condition? Can we not perswade you to take *Christ's part*, and *your own*, against the Devil, the World, and the Flesh, which you have renounc'd in your Baptism? If *Importunity* could prevail with an *unrighteous Judge*, to do good *to another*, how much more should it prevail with *you*, to do good to *your selves*? Have Mercy therefore upon your own Souls, and do not render it impossible for us to be any farther serviceable to them. God himself will not save you *against your Wills*, much less can *we* do

do it; which will the better appear, when I ſhall have given you a ſatisfactory anſwer to the ſecond Inquiry, *viz.*

2. How far we may be inſtrumental to the Salvation of other Men? and with what fear and caution we muſt attempt it? As there is no good ſo great, as that which reſpects the Souls of Men; ſo certainly, to be a *Fellow-worker* with Chriſt, as an Agent in it, or Inſtrument of it, muſt needs out-vie all other Priviledges: And, if the Heathens miſtook *Paul* and *Barnabas* for *Gods in the likeneſs of Men*, for *reſtoring the Criple of* Lyſtra *to his Limbs* again; with much better reaſon may we magnifie them, who have ſo much *Communion with God upon Earth*, as to become *Coadjutors with him* in the Salvation of a Soul from Sin. *Divinarum omnium perfectionum diviniſſima eſt perfectio, cooperatorum eſſe, in reductione animarum ad ſuum creatorem.* Now God hath given *all Men* ſome *ſpecial Powers and Miniſtries*, whereby they may Charitably *advance* the great Intereſt of Souls: St. *Paul* aſſerts the poſſibility of the Chriſtian *Wives ſaving her Unbelieving Husband*; and he tells *Timothy*, that in *taking heed to himſelf and his Doctrine, he ſhould both ſave himſelf, and them that heard him*; and he himſelf

Dionyſ. Carthuſ.

1 Cor. 7. 16.

1 Tim. 4. 16.

ſelf *became all things to all men, that he might by all means ſave ſome*; And, *The Salvation of a Soul from death*, is attributed to *the Inſtruments* of their Converſion, by St. *James*, to perſwade them to *diligence* in their Office: Save them; that is, *Quantum in vobis eſt, ut ſalventur orate.* Pray for their Converſion, and, if by any means you can, *provoke them to emulation*, bring them to Faith and Repentance, that you may ſave them. 1 Cor. 9. 22. *Aquin.* Rom. 11. 14.

Alas! it is *God alone* who can *pierce the ſcales* of this *Leviathan*, and make the *hearts* of obdurate Sinners feel, which are *harder than the nether Milſtone.* We are but as *Striplings* againſt that *Goliah:* Our *Commiſſion* is indeed from the Almighty, and in his Name we are come forth to wreſtle, *not with Fleſh and Blood, but with Principalities and Powers, and the Rulers of the darkneſs of this World*; and, it is *our God* who muſt chooſe out *the Stones that we ſling*, and carry them to the mark, and make them *ſink*, not into the *forehead*, but into *the hearts of theſe uncircumciſed Philiſtins*, and *ſmite them to the ground*, that, with *Saul*, they may *get ſtrength* by their very falls. We can but *Woo and Warn you*, we cannot *Compel* you to be happy, I wiſh we could. *A Medico & Paſtore* *Cornel. à Lapide.*

ſtore requiritur cura, non curatio; utpote cum morbus non raro ſit incurabilis. If you will follow our Preſcriptions, *your Diſeaſes* are *not incurable*; have *pity* therefore on your periſhing Souls, and *cloſe* with the preſent Overtures of Mercy. God hath ſent *Us* to *You*, as he did his *Holy Angel* to *Lot*, to lay the Merciful Hands of an *Holy Violence* upon you, that you may *not ſtay any longer* in your Sins, but *eſcape for your Lives*, leſt you be conſumed: If *you are afraid* of theſe enſuing Judgments, *we* are afraid *with you*; if not, we are *afraid for you*, and we are the *more afraid* for you, *the leſs* you are for your ſelves; *Our Fleſh trembles for fear of you, and we are afraid of God's Judgments.* 'Tis with an *aking Heart, and trembling Hand*, that the *Chirurgion* cuts off the Gangreen'd Member of his Boſom-Friend; and, it is alſo with *great Compaſſion*, and no leſs *Fear*, that we endeavour to recover you out of *that Fire*, which will *ſinge* you, if you ſtay but one moment longer in it, and *devour you* as infallibly, if you do not, *whilſt it is called To Day, eſcape it*; the great *importance and difficulty* of which undertaking of yours, will appear, if you conſider in the third place,

Pſal. 119. 120.

III. What

III. What is meant, by *Pulling them out of the Fire*, and how we muſt do it? What the phraſe *implies*, and what it *requires of us*? Ἐκ τῦ πυρὸς ἁρπάζοντες. Save them by *ſnatching them out of the Fire*, is a Proverbial *ſpeech* for thoſe who get hardly out of danger; *I have* Amos 4. 11. *overthrown ſome of you, as God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah, and ye were as a Fire-brand pluck'd out of the Burning:* And, *Is not this a* Zac. 3. 2. *Brand pluckt out of the Fire? He himſelf ſhall be* 1 Cor. 3. 18. *ſaved, yet ſo as by Fire*; that is, He ſhall awake and *leap out* of Danger, as a Man at Midnight doth naked out of his Bed, at the Door or Window, when his Houſe is on Fire: which words do accordingly import theſe four things:

1. The great *Danger* of Impenitent Sinners.

2. The *Poſſibility* of their *Deliverance.*

3. The *Difficulty* of eſcaping their Imminent and Everlaſting Deſtruction.

4. By *what Means* it is, that we may Charitably *aſſiſt them* in their eſcape? and which will be the *only poſſible way* of doing it?

1. The condition of every *impenitent Sinner* is very *deſperate*, and his danger greater than
Matth. 5. 22. we can poſſibly imagine; for, he is *not only in danger of the Judgment, or of the Council*, but alſo of *Hell-Fire*, which is always inkindled even in this life; here it *burns inwardly*, but there it *blazes out*. When we conſider with what variety of *Temptations* the Devil ſtrives to beguile you, how many *Deſigns* and *Stratagems* he hath laid in the World to undermine and enſnare you; and, that if all *the Powers of Darkneſs* can hinder it, we ſhall never diſintangle you out of his ſnares: and, when we ſee you *live ſo ſecurely*, as if your pretious *Souls were* already *bound up in the Bundle of Life*, even when they are ready to drop irrecoverably into Hell; and when you *prepare* no more *to meet God*, whilſt in wrath he ſeems to approach you, than if you *cared not* whether he came or no; Your *looſe and diſſolute*, your *ſinful and ſecure* courſes, do evidently ſhew, that *there is no fear of God before your eyes*. *Sampſon*, for all his *ſtrength* and *ſtoutneſs*, durſt not lie ſtill, when he heard that the *Philiſtins* were come upon him: Where there is an apprehenſion of ſome great *Evil impendent*, there cannot but be a great meaſure of *Fear*, and

and where ſo great fear, there no leſs vehement *deſire to eſcape*; and where there is ſuch a vehement deſire, there will be a moſt earneſt and *careful endeavour of preventing* (if by any means it may be) of that evil: But when none of theſe appear, but men *go on confidently* in their *evil ways*, as if there were *no danger* of their Damnation; it concerns *us* to try, if we can *ſhake* this their *carnal confidence*, which is founded upon *Abſurdity*, *Impoſſibility and Blaſphemy*, and is not *in Chriſt*, but *againſt him*: as if they took *him* for a *Falſe Prophet*, and his *Denunciations* of future Judgments for meer *Deluſions*.

So *ſervilely diſingenuous* is our *corrupt nature*, that the propoſal of *Rewards*, though never ſo great, doth, in no proportion, lead us ſo forcibly to our Intereſt and Duty, as do the *Threats and Menaces* of Puniſhment; and therefore God is far more obliging to us in the *ſevereſt of his Temporal Judgments*, than he would be in *his Mercies*; we being a People whom *Vengeance only* can reclaim; whom nothing but *Terrours* can allure to Goodneſs; and, who need ſome *preſent Flaſhes* of Hell-fire to *ſcare* us from embracing thoſe Future and Everlaſting Flames. Leſt therefore the *Meſſenger* of

of death ſhould hurry you away in the heat and violence of your Sins, and there *be none to deliver you from the Worm that dieth not, and the Fire which is not quenched*; we, who *watch for your Souls*, are to do *what we can* to ſtartle you into the amendment of your Lives. And Oh that I could but uncover the face of the *deep and devouring Gulph of Tophet* in all its Terrours, and *open the Grate* of that Infernal Furnace! for if you had but any the leaſt degree of *Spiritual Life and Senſe in you*, (and *the Light which is in you were not Darkneſs*) you could not *look into Hell* by a preſent Contemplation, but you would make it the *Grand Deſign* of your Lives to eſcape the *falling into it*, by a future Condemnation. Hide not your ſelves from your own Souls, and *they* will tell you, that there is but yet *a ſtep* between you and Hell: But if you are *Obſtinati ad moriendum*, ſturdily reſolved *not to underſtand* your Miſery and Danger, till it be *paſt prevention*, there is an end of all our hopes concerning you. If you have the Reaſon and Underſtanding of Men, you will not dare to leap into the Bottomleſs-Pit *with your Eyes open*, nor to *dally* with the Vengeance of the *Almighty*. Will you ſit ſtill till the *Tide* come in, and then harden your ſelves with a vain

conceit,

conceit, that you ſhall *eſcape drowning*? If *we* cannot undeceive you, the *King of Terrours* ſhortly will; for when Death *ſtrikes its Dart through your Liver*, it will let out *your Souls and Hopes together* into the Amazing Gulph of Endleſs Deſperation. We dare not therefore *daub your Conſciences with ſuch untempered Mortar*, as to flatter you into a *Fatal Opinion* of the *Safety of your Condition*; but think, we oblige you moſt, when we ſhew you, *how dear your Sins are like to coſt you*; in which, if we have terrified you to purpoſe, with the juſt apprehenſion of the manifold Dangers you are in, whilſt you continue in a ſtate of Impenitency, your Humiliation will be *matter of rejoycing* to us; and in the depth of your ſorrow and anguiſh of Spirit, we can ſafely adminiſter this Cordial to revive you:

2. That though *your Danger be great and imminent*, yet there is ſtill, by God's Mercy, a *Poſſibility of your Deliverance* out of it. Were you ſhut up in Everlaſting Miſery, without remedy, we *would not come to torment you before your time*: but, thanks be to God, (whoſe *Mercy is over all his Works*) your caſe is not yet ſo deſperate, but that you may be everlaſtingly ſafe, if you pleaſe. 'Tis too true, that *you are already*

already in the Fire; your courſes are as dangerous and deſtructive as the Fire; you are *in incendio libidinis & obſcœnitatis*; you *burn in your luſts one towards another*, but you may be ſaved for all that: *God wills not the death of a Sinner:* though the Flames of Hell have *ſing'd his Garments that were ſpotted by the Fleſh*, and taken hold of the *Hairs of his Head*, yet God ſincerely deſires that he may be reſcued from Damnation: though he be gone beyond all the Methods and Revelations of his Mercy, and run into the horrible Impieties of *Impudence*, *Apoſtacy*, and *Ingratitude*; yet if *he will*, even now at laſt, withdraw his feet from thoſe *Paths that lead to Deſtruction*; or if *we can ſnatch*, or force him from the brink of the Bottomleſs Pit, he is not yet out of the power and poſſibilities of recovering from thoſe Everlaſting Burnings; *He ſhall ſuffer loſs, but he*
1 Cor. 3. 15. *may be ſaved, yet ſo as by Fire.* If men will leave their Sins whilſt it is called *To Day*, Gods Judgments will alſo leave them; for their Iniquities paſs on to Eternal Flames only by the train of Impenitence; nor can they ever caſt them into Hell, if they repent of them *timely and effectually*; which, that none of us may be tempted to *procraſtinate*, as if there were

no

no danger of our delay, but haſten to *flee from the wrath to come*, whilſt it is yet to come, let us obſerve in the third place,

3. The *difficulty of eſcaping* this their imminent and everlaſting deſtruction: Their *Pardon*, as well as themſelves, muſt *be fetched out of the Fire*. They perhaps may ſee no danger in their condition, and as if, like *Salamanders*, they were in their proper Element, may be diſpleaſed at thoſe who would *pluck them out of the Fire*; but we muſt tell them, that they are loſt and undone for ever, except they be *renewed by the Power of God*; nay, 'tis a *miraculous Grace*, and an *extraordinary change*, which muſt turn the current ſtream of their Iniquity, and their *Salvation muſt be wrought out with* infinite *fear and trembling*; nor is there any entrance for them into Heaven, but by the *ſtrait paſſage* of a *ſecond birth*; the bleſſed opportunity whereof if they do *procraſtinate*, they may loſe for ever. And therefore,

4. By what *Means* we may aſſiſt them in this great Work of their eſcaping, and what is the only poſſible *way to ſave them*, is to be the moſt important inquiry of our whole Lives, it being the greateſt ſervice we can do to God, or them; and if I can either inſtruct or

quicken you in it, we ſhall both have abundant cauſe to bleſs God for ſo ſeaſonable an undertaking.

Now firſt, we muſt be *earneſt and importunate* with our periſhing Brethren, as the *Angel* was with *Lot*, *and force them out of Sodom*; Admoniſh them with an holy vehemency to *flee for their lives*, and to eſcape to the Mountain, leſt they be conſum'd; Pull them haſtily, and, with a *charitable violence*, out of their ſins, as a Mother doth her Child out of the fire, when apprehenſive of the danger.

Ἐλεγχεῖν ἀπολομῶς, Uſe a *ſharp*, *quick*, and *cutting reprehenſion*; our words muſt be as *nails driven to the head*, ſo as to be faſtned and rivetted in the Soul of a Sinner, and to deſtroy *the Beaſt*, that we may ſave *the Man*.

Men muſt firſt be forced and *fired out of themſelves*, or elſe they will never come to *Chriſt*: and, *We* are the *Servants of the moſt high God*, who are *ſent to compel you to come* Acts 16. 17. *into Heaven*, and to *ſhew unto you the way of Salvation*. Our Commiſſion and Inſtructions are to tell you, that if you would be *ſaved from ſuffering*, you muſt alſo be *ſaved from ſinning*; your Lives and your Luſts cannot both be preſerv'd: nor will it be ſufficient that you

forſake

forſake *ſome* of your ſins; but, the *whole body* of them muſt be deſtroyed: You muſt *Crucifie the Old Man*, and *Mortifie every Iniquity which now reigneth in you*; ſo, that unleſs you leave *the Lap of Dalilah*, and be Divorced from your *beloved Herodias*, you cannot be ſaved. You muſt give up *every Traytor* that is Harbour'd in your Boſom, or you cannot be at Peace with the *King of Heaven*. Your *Right Hand muſt be cut off*, and *your Right Eye pulled out*, if they ſtand in oppoſition to the Laws of *Chriſt*, whoſe Dominion you muſt chearfully ſubmit to, *to all intents and purpoſes*, if ever you expect deliverance by him.

Let not therefore the Voice of your Conſcience be drowned, through the Avocation of *Senſual Pleaſures*, or the hurry of *Worldly Buſineſs*, or the noiſe and clamour of Earthly *Cares*, *Luſts* or *Affections*; but, give it leave to do its Office, and liſten to what it ſpeaks here, leſt it ſpeak what you would not be willing to hear hereafter. Remember you ſtand now upon your Good-behaviour for Eternity; and, ſuch as your *Preſent Choice* is, will your *Everlaſting Condition* be. I wiſh it were in my power to *fright you into your Wits*, and to ſcare you into the way of Salvation. What

will you do *when the Philiſtins are upon you?* When the World ſhall take its *laſt leave* of you? When you muſt bid your Friends, Houſes, and Lands; your Pleaſures, Places and Preferments, Farewel for ever; and, when he who is now *your Tempter*, will prove *your Tormentor?* Can you *dwell with Everlaſting Burnings?* Can you *abide the Conſuming Fire?* If not, how can you perſwade your ſelves to live any longer in ſuch a courſe of Life, every Act whereof is a ſtep to Perdition? Unleſs you can perſwade your ſelves, that *God's Compaſſion* will *Evacuate his Laws*, and Fruſtrate all the Wiſe Deſigns of his *Juſtice*, you can Dream of no way of Eſcaping. We are obliged therefore, for your ſakes, to become *Boanerges*, *Sons of Thunder*; and, to ſhew you, not only the *Greatneſs*, but the *Preſentneſs of the Danger* you are in; and, to ſet the Terrours of the Almighty continually before your eyes. Thus *Nathan* dealt with *David*, denouncing againſt him God's heavy Judgments; *The Sword ſhall never depart from thy Houſe:* and, St. *Paul delivered up the Inceſtuous Perſon to Satan, for the deſtruction of the Fleſh, that his Spirit might be ſaved*; and thus did *Jonah* to the City of *Nineveh*, *Yet forty days and the City ſhall*

2 Sam. 12. 10.

1 Cor. 5. 5.

Jonah 3.

be

be deſtroyed. Some Spirits will not be *kept out of the Fire*, but by *caſting them into it:* Your terrifying them *with the Flames*, will be a means to keep them *out of them:* A Showre of *Spiritual Brimſtone*, ſuch as God rained down upon *Sodom* in the Letter, is beſt for them; if you ſpare them, you deſtroy them. Some Men muſt be *led to Heaven*, by the *way of Hell:* 'tis a very *deſirable fear* which is a means of *pulling Men out of the Fire.* We are *ſaved by Faith*, as that receiveth and taketh hold of *Chriſt*; and, we are alſo *ſaved by Fear*, as that taketh hold of us, and drives us to *Chriſt:* By *Faith* we ſee, and apply our help in *Chriſt*; and, *by Fear*, we are brought to ſee our need of his help. Thus is a good Heart bettered, by all the Diſpenſations of God, as well by his *Judgmenti*, as his *Mercies.* If God *ſpeak Death*, it is an advantage to his Spiritual Life; and, he Mends upon his *Threatnings*, as well as his *Promiſes.* The *Devils* themſelves *believe and tremble*; and, 'tis impoſſible for them to eſcape *Hell*, who come ſhort of the *Religion* of ſuch as are already there. *Quanta damnatio eſt à damnatis damnari?*

If therefore we can ſo *humble Men* with Terrours, that they may *be exalted* in God's good time,

time, it will be the greateſt kindneſs we can do them: Be the Means never ſo *pungent and dreadful*, the Severities never ſo great; if they be by Experience found *neceſſary*, for the prevention of greater Miſchiefs, they are to be thankfully receiv'd, as Tokens of the ſincereſt Friendſhip:
Prov. 27. 6. *Faithful are the wounds of a Friend, but the kiſſes of an Enemy are deceitful.* If my Companion be falling *into the Fire*, or from a *Precipice*, and I, in ſnatching him back, put his Arm out of joynt; Would he call his eſcape, *An unkind Deliverance*, becauſe it coſt him ſome pain? *Phyſitians* muſt not be moved at the Rage or Revilings of their *diſtempered Patients*; but, reſolve to do and ſuffer the utmoſt, before they give them over: and ſo muſt we do, and ſuffer any thing (but Sin) to ſave a Soul from death; we muſt preſcribe Men that, which may be beſt for their Health, how ill ſoever they may take it.

But, if we cannot reſcue you out of thoſe *Flames*, nor impoſe the *Kingdom of Heaven* upon you, by ſuch an *holy violence*; we muſt neceſſarily leave you under greater *Guilt* than we found you; and, your *Pains* will be increaſed even for *the loſs of ours*: It will be a great part of *your Hell*, to think, *what Pains*, and Patience,

ence, *we uſed*, to ſave you from it, and all in vain: How Scornfully you have refuſed our Calls, and Rejected our Importunities? You cannot take a more certain courſe to *deſtroy your ſelves*, and *diſoblige us*, than to turn our *Compaſſion* into *Complaints*, and to force us from *interceding for, and with you*, to *accuſe*, and *witneſs againſt you*; that, when we had *Invited you to the Marriage-Feaſt*, with all the Earneſtneſs imaginable, you would not be *Courted*; no, nor *Compell'd to come in*. *God*, and your *own Conſciences*, will one day tell you, and all the World, what Overtures of Mercy have been made you, and how plainly and frequently you have been *forewarned of the Evil Day*; when, with Fruitleſs Cries and Horrour, you ſhall beſeech, too late, for thoſe Opportunities of *Grace*, which you have ſo long deſpiſed. Now, that it may never be your *Doom*, thus ſturdily *to caſt away your ſelves*, Conſider, *whilſt it is called To Day*, how much it is your *Intereſt*, as well as *your Duty*, *to hate the very Garment ſpotted by the Fleſh*: The Explication of which *Phraſe*, is the laſt thing premiſed, and that which may ſerve for the *Application* of the *Text*.

4. *Hating*

4. *Hating the* very *Garment ſpotted by the Fleſh.* 'Tis a *Proverbial Speech*; whereby is ſignified, the abhorrency which we ought to have, of any the leaſt degree of Uncleanneſs, in alluſion to the prohibited, and unclean Gar-
Lev. 13. 47. ments of the *Leprous* perſon; *looking diligently,*
Heb. 12. 15. *leſt any root of bitterneſs ſpringing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled: Putting off the old man with his deeds*; that is, all evil Affections,
Verſ. 8. and ſeparating our ſelves *from thoſe filthy dreams that defile the Fleſh.* Deal not with them as *Companions*, but *Phyſitians*; beware of *catching* that Infection which you come to *cure*: Draw them out of the *Fire*, if you can; but, let them not pull you in too.

Æth. *Et intuentes in tegumento ſuo maculam ſcortationis ſuæ.* The *Gnoſticks* defil'd, not only their *Manners and Actions*, but alſo *their very Garments*; and, I wiſh I could ſay, that, *This Age* were not ſtain'd with *that*, or a *greater Uncleanneſs.* When *Chriſt* aroſe from the Dead, *he left his Winding-ſheet behind him*; and ſo, in the Spiritual Reſurrection, muſt we leave *the Garments of the Old Man* behind us. *Odio habentes, non ſolum turpia facta carnis, ſed etiam quicquid illo modo ad turpitudinem pertinet. Abſtain from all appearance of evil*; from whatſoever hath

hath a ſhew of it, and is liable to miſconſtruction; not only from the *Crime it ſelf*, but from *every Inſtrument of it*, from every path which leads to it; from all Incentives, Occaſions, and Inducements, from whatſoever may begin, or promote, becauſe all theſe things are of the ſame *Nature* with it. Some few there were, even in *Sardis*, *who had not defiled their Garments*: and, I hope, there are ſome *few* among us, who have *eſcap'd the Pollutions of this World, through the knowledge of our Saviour*; and, who *live* like Men who are ſatisfied, that they *muſt live* to all Eternity: And, the leſs appearance there is of a *General Innocence*, or a *Publick Reformation* among us, the more doth it concern every private Man, to *waſh his Hands in innocency*, or his *Heart* in *Penitential Tears*, becauſe, it may be, God will *Save the whole Nation* for the *Repentance of a few*; He may hear the Prayers of *Ten* for a *City*, though the Generality of them ſhould remain Unreformed: All *his fellow-paſſengers lives were beſtowed upon St.* Paul; *Sodom* had been ſaved if *Ten Penitents* had been in it; and *Jeruſalem*, if but *One*: Or, if the Lord be ſo peremptorily bent to bring in ſuch a *General Judgment*, that though *Moſes*, or *Samuel*; though *Noah*, *Daniel* or *Job* were among

1 Theſſ. 5. 22.

Rev. 3. 4.

them, *they* ſhould not prevail for the ſaving of others, yet at leaſt we ſhould *ſave our own Souls* alive; eſpecially if we left our Sins out of *perfect hatred*, before they left us. The *Old Man* may be ſorry, that he cannot be Young; and, the *Sick Man*, that he cannot Revel as his Companions; but, it is not a *Principle of Conſcience* which makes either of them forſake their *Habitual Sins*; nor do they *hate* them, as Men Thoroughly Convinced of the manifold Danger of every Particular Iniquity muſt needs do.

Laſtly, Let us not *put it off till to Morrow*; for, we know not where the next Night may lodge us: but conſider, The *Hourly Poſsibilities of Death*; and, The *Succeeding State of Torment*, which will Revenge, with moſt Severe Inflictions, the few *Minutes* of our Reprieve: Then ſhall we endeavour our *Own*, and *Other Mens* Salvation with *fear and compaſsion*, and be ſollicitous to *pull* them and our ſelves *out of the Fire*; and let all who ſhall make an Inſpection into our Lives, ſee, That *we hate even the Garment ſpotted by the Fleſh*; and, That we are *led by the holy Spirit of God*, in that *Good Old Way*, which leads to Life, and that Eternal.

I ſhall

I ſhall cloſe this Diſcourſe, as our Apoſtle does this Epiſtle: *Now unto him, who is able to keep us from falling, and to preſent us faultleſs before the Preſence of his Glory with exceeding Joy,; To the only wiſe God our Saviour, be Glory and Majeſty, Dominion and Power, now and ever,* Amen. Verſ. 24, 25.

FINIS.